

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1-2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently amended) A method for analyzing verbal communication, the method comprising acts of:

(A) producing an electronic recording of a plurality of spoken words;

(B) processing the electronic recording to identify a plurality of word alternatives for each of the spoken words, each of the plurality of word alternatives being identified by comparing a portion of the electronic recording with a lexicon, each of the plurality of word alternatives being assigned a probability of correctly identifying a spoken word;

(C) loading the word alternatives and the probabilities to a database for subsequent analysis;  
and

(D) examining the word alternatives and the probabilities to determine at least one characteristic of the plurality of spoken words;

wherein the at least one characteristic includes a frequency with which a first word alternative occurs within the plurality of spoken words; and

~~The method of claim 2,~~ wherein the at least one characteristic further includes a frequency with which a second word alternative occurs within the plurality of spoken words, and a comparison of the frequencies of the first word alternative and the second word alternative.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the at least one characteristic further includes a comparison of the frequencies of the first word alternative and the second word alternative in a plurality of time periods.

5. (Currently amended) The method of claim [1] 3, wherein the at least one characteristic includes a presence of a pattern, the pattern comprising a defined sequence of word alternatives.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the pattern is defined by a human user.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the pattern is defined using a graphical user interface.

8. (Currently amended) The method of claim [1] 3, further comprising an act, performed before the act (B), comprising modifying the lexicon.

9. (Currently amended) The method of claim [1] 3, wherein the act (C) further comprises loading the word alternatives and the probabilities to a database.

10-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently amended) A computer-readable medium having instructions recorded thereon, which instructions, when executed by a computer, perform a method for analyzing verbal communication, the method comprising acts of:

(A) producing an electronic recording of a plurality of spoken words;

(B) processing the electronic recording to identify a plurality of word alternatives for each of the spoken words, each of the plurality of word alternatives being identified by comparing a portion of the electronic recording with a lexicon, each of the plurality of word alternatives being assigned a probability of correctly identifying a spoken word;

(C) loading the word alternatives and the probabilities to a database for subsequent analysis;  
and

(D) examining the word alternatives and the probabilities to determine at least one characteristic of the plurality of spoken words;

wherein the at least one characteristic includes a frequency with which a first word alternative occurs within the plurality of spoken words; and

The method of claim 11, wherein the at least one characteristic further includes a frequency with which a second word alternative occurs within the plurality of spoken words, and a comparison of the frequencies of the first word alternative and the second word alternative.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the at least one characteristic further includes a comparison of the frequencies of the first word alternative and the second word alternative in a plurality of time periods.

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~10~~ 12, wherein the at least one characteristic includes a presence of a pattern, the pattern comprising a defined sequence of word alternatives.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the pattern is defined by a human user.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the pattern is defined using a graphical user interface.

17. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~10~~ 12, further comprising an act, performed before the act (B), comprising modifying the lexicon.

18. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~10~~ 12, wherein the act (C) further comprises loading the word alternatives and the probabilities to a database.

19-34. (Cancelled)